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ABSTRACT

There is research support of the hypothesis that engaging in multiple roles yields better health and greater life satisfaction, and there is support of the hypothesis that multiple role involvement leads to symptoms of role strain. No study has employed a comprehensive model to address the impact of multiple roles or attempted to identify potential mediating factors which could account for both beneficial and negative outcomes. This study examined role and life satisfaction and stress in men and women involved in multiple life roles and explored the mediating effects of coping strategies, hardiness, social support, and gender on these levels of stress and satisfaction. A sample of 102 male and 111 female university faculty, research scientists, and administrators involved in multiple role lifestyles completed questionnaires assessing these variables. Participants reported relatively low levels of stress and moderately high levels of satisfaction with their roles. Men and women differed significantly on several of the variables (p .05). Regressions analyses revealed that the various forms of satisfaction were significantly predicted by hardiness, social support, and coping strategies (p .05). Stress was significantly related to lack of hardiness and use of avoidance coping strategies for men and women (p .001). These findings have implications for counseling multiple role men and women. (Author/NB)

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Mediators of Stress and Role Satisfaction in Multiple Role Persons

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Abstract

This study examined role and life satisfaction and stress in men and women involved in multiple life roles and explored the mediating effects of coping strategies, hardiness, social support, and gender on these levels of stress and satisfaction. A sample of 102 male and 111 female university faculty, research scientists, and administrators involved in multiple role lifestyles completed questionnaires assessing these variables. Participants reported relatively low levels of stress and moderately high levels of satisfaction with their roles. Men and women differed significantly on several of the variables ($p<.05$). Regression analyses revealed that the various forms of satisfaction were significantly predicted by hardiness, social support, and coping strategies ($p<.05$). Stress was significantly related to lack of hardiness and use of avoidance coping strategies for men and women ($p<.001$). Implications for counseling multiple role men and women were discussed.

Mediators of Stress and Role Satisfaction in Multiple Role Persons

After the industrial revolution men and women devoted the major focus of their lives to one role. For men, it was the breadwinning role, and for women, the family role. However, with recent societal changes, both men and women have become simultaneously involved in many different roles. Although the exact number of multiple role persons is not know, data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census (1986) indicate that many people fit into this category. In 1986, fifty-five percent of married women over 15 (over 30 million women) participated in the labor force. Furthermore, 68.4% of married women with children between the ages of 6 and 17, and 53.8% of married women with children under 6 were in the labor force. Men are also becoming involved in more roles. Although men have traditionally specialized in the external family breadwinner role (Pleck, 1979), they have been increasingly involved in the parental role, taking on more responsibility for infant and child care (Parke, 1981).

Historically, career and family involvement have never been easily combined in the same person (Hunt & Hunt, 1982). Theoretical statements have been written

by sociologists proposing both detrimental effects (e.g., Goode, 1960) and rewarding effects (e.g., Sieber, 1974) of being involved in multiple roles. Numerous researchers have investigated the effects of role involvement on various indices of health and well-being. This literature seems to indicate that people involved in any given role (i.e., spouse, parent, or worker role) are healthier, physically and mentally, and are more satisfied than those who are not involved in that role (Cooke & Rousseau, 1984; Gove & Hughes, 1979; Verbrugge, 1983). Further, researchers have identified positive effects with the increased role involvement of women. Studies have shown higher levels of physical well-being (Verbrugge, 1982) and lower levels of depression (Kandel, Davies, & Raveis, 1985) among women who occupied the three roles of wife, mother, and paid worker compared with women who occupied fewer roles. In studies that have looked at men and women together as a group, increased role involvement was related to lower psychological distress and increased role satisfaction (Crosby, 1982; Quinn & Staines, 1979; Spreitzer, Snyder, & Larson, 1979; Thoits, 1983).

However, at least for women, role involvement is also related to role strain. Working women have been

found to experience more role conflict (Hall & Gordon, 1973), working mothers more role strain (Barnett & Baruch, 1985), and mothers with three or more children more physical symptoms (Woods & Hulka, 1979). It appears that as the number of roles a woman occupies increases, so do experiences of role overload, role conflict, and strain symptoms. The impact of multiple roles on men has not been examined, perhaps because women have been seen as adding roles, while men have not.

Thus, there is research support of the hypothesis that engaging in multiple roles yields better health plus greater satisfaction with life, and there is research support of the hypothesis that multiple role involvement leads to symptoms of role strain. It should be noted that the reported studies have focused only on women or a mixed gender group, have considered only one role at a time, and have included only indices of mental health or indices of well-being. Thus, no study has employed a comprehensive model to address the impact of multiple roles or attempted to identify potential mediating factors which could account for both beneficial and negative outcomes.

One model which would link life circumstance to outcomes such as strain and satisfaction is the interactional model of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This model conceptualizes a dynamic relationship between the person and the environment such that strain occurs when the environment is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and as endangering well-being. This person-environment interaction is mediated by cognitive appraisal and use of coping strategies. Thus, the individual has external and internal demands that are seen as exceeding (leading to strain) or not exceeding (leading to well-being) resources depending not only on the strength of the demand but also the cognitive appraisal of the situation and coping strategies available. Three such mediating factors that have research support are the use of coping strategies, social support, and personality style.

There is a growing consensus that coping strategies play a central role in the effectiveness of an individual's response to stressors (Billings & Moos, 1981). Increasing emphasis has been placed on the individual's attempts to utilize personal and social resources to manage stress reactions and to take specific actions to modify the problematic aspects of

the environment. The concept of social support has also received much attention in the social, behavioral and medical literature in the past decade (see Bruhn & Philips, 1984 for a review). Because multiple role persons are involved in many roles in which they interact with others, the questions of whether they receive social support from these significant others and how that support affects their levels of stress and satisfaction are important to consider. Finally, the personality of the individual is thought to influence the appraisal process. Kobasa and her colleagues (Kobasa, 1979, 1982; Kobasa, Maddi, & Puccetti, 1982; Maddi, Kobasa, & Hoover, 1979) have identified a stress-resistant personality style they call hardiness. Hardiness has been associated with the ability to manage high work demands without resultant stress symptoms. Thus, in the interactional model of stress the demands of multiple role involvement could be seen as mediated by the use of coping strategies, social support, and hardiness.

The purpose of this study was twofold: to examine the levels of life stress and satisfaction among men and women involved in multiple life roles and to explore the mediating effects of coping strategies, hardiness,

social support, and gender on the levels of stress and satisfaction. The specific research questions are (a) how can multiple role persons be described in terms of level of stress, amount of career, spousal, parental, leisure, and general life satisfaction, hardiness, typical coping strategies, and level of social support? (b) do male and female multiple role persons differ on these variables? (c) how do gender, hardiness, social support, and typical coping strategies relate to the levels of career, marital, parental, leisure, and life satisfaction of multiple role persons? and (d) how do gender, hardiness, social support, and typical coping strategies relate to the level of stress in multiple role persons?

Method

Subjects

To control work and role variables, the subjects in this study were all in academic positions and were all simultaneously involved in the three life roles of career, spouse, and parent. The sample for this study was drawn from men and women who held faculty, research scientist, or administrative positions at a large southwestern university. A list of the names of possible subjects was obtained, totaling 1892 men and

621 women. A sample of 150 male and 150 female subjects were randomly selected. All selected subjects were mailed a letter explaining the study, describing the criteria for inclusion, and inviting their participation. Subjects were asked to return the letter with their response in a pre-addressed envelope provided to them. When potential subjects were eliminated from the study because they did not fit the criteria for inclusion or indicated they were not interested in participating, a replacement was obtained by randomly selecting other potential subjects from the list. This procedure was repeated until at least 100 males and 100 females who met the sample criteria agreed to participate.

By the end of the sampling procedure a total of 600 males and 621 females had been sampled. Of these 112 men and 127 women agreed to participate in the study and 102 men and 111 women returned a correctly completed questionnaire, forming the final study sample.

The mean age of the male participants was 42.4 (SD=6.6), with ages ranging from 30 to 61. Female participants averaged 37.5 years of age (SD=6.2), with a range of 25 to 51. The men reported a mean of 1.9 children living at home (SD=.94), with 77% having just

one or two children. Women had an average of 1.6 children living at home (SD=.63), with 94% having two or fewer children at home. Ethnically, the sample was comprised of 202 caucasians (95%), with the remaining 5% including 3 blacks, 4 Hispanics, and 4 Asians.

The majority (n=164, 77%) of the sample held faculty positions, 20.7% held administrative positions, and 2.3% were research scientists. Men were much more likely to hold higher academic rank than women, with 38.2% of men and 1.8% of women being full professors, 32.4% of men and 6.3% of women being associate professor, and 28.4% of men and 22.5% of women holding the rank of assistant professor. There were no male lecturers, while 26.1% of women were lecturers. Only female administrators were represented in the final sample, comprising 39.6% of women in the sample.

For the faculty members, the mean number of years at the university for men and women were 8.86 and 4.65, respectively, and the average number of years teaching in their fields were 12.94 and 6.46, respectively. About two-thirds (65.7%) of the men were tenured, while only 15.4% of the women were tenured. Men tended to be found in the departments of agriculture (22.6%) and engineering (15.7%), whereas women were most likely to be in liberal arts (22.2%) and education (12.7%).

Measures

All subjects received a packet consisting of a letter which provided a brief description of the purpose of the study and instructions for participation, a pre-addressed return envelope, and several questionnaires which are described in this section.

Demographic information. Several demographic items were included in the questionnaire. Information on subjects' gender, marital status, number of children living in the home, and whether they perceived their jobs as careers was requested.

Stress. The Strain Questionnaire (SQ) (Lefebvre & Sandford, 1985) was used to measure stress. The SQ is a 48-item self-report paper-and-pencil test in which stress is conceptualized as a syndrome of physical, behavioral, and cognitive symptoms that are elicited, to varying degrees, by environmental demands upon the individual. This syndrome is relatively independent of concomitant emotional states (e.g., anxiety or depression) and is not severe or chronic enough to have resulted in clinical diagnoses. The respondents were instructed to rate how often in the last week they experienced each of the 48 symptoms by responding never, once or twice, three or four times, five or six times,

or every day. Responses were assigned numerical equivalents (1-5) and summed to obtain a total score and scores on each of the subscales.

Life satisfaction. The Index of Well-being, developed by Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976) is a 9-item instrument used to measure life satisfaction. Eight of the items use a semantic differential technique with a 7-point rating scale. Respondents were asked to describe their "present life" by checking a point on the scale between two adjective poles. For example, respondents choose a point between boring and interesting. The ninth item asked, "How satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?", and was responded to on a 7-point Likert-type scale. Scores on the Index of Well-Being were calculated using the formula reported by Campbell, Converse and Rodgers (1976) which gave considerably more weight to the overall life satisfaction item than to any of the semantic differential items taken alone (Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, & 1976).

Career satisfaction. Satisfaction with one's career was assessed using a 9-item scale created by Osherson and Dill (1983). These authors based their scale on the work satisfaction questionnaire developed

by Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976). Osherson and Dill (1983) proposed that feeling actualized and feeling successful are the two critical components of job satisfaction. Feeling actualized refers to the perceived fit between career and abilities and interests. Feeling successful is measured by items like "Up to now I've achieved most of my ambitions at work." Items were responded to on a Likert-type scale of 1 to 5 (agree to disagree), yielding a total score ranging from 9 through 45.

Marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction was measured using an instrument adapted from the Marital Satisfaction Inventory (MSI) (Roach, Frazier, & Bowden (1981). Each item was rated on a 1 to 5 Likert-type scale ranging from agree to disagree. Total marital satisfaction was computed by summing the item responses for a possible score ranging from 10 through 50.

Parental satisfaction. Satisfaction in the parental role was measured using a 5-item scale created by Marini (1980). The scale includes items measuring satisfaction with children's behavior toward the parent and items measuring satisfaction with the parent's behavior toward the children. Items were rated on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not at all satisfied)

to 5 (completely satisfied). Responses were summed to get a total score which ranged from a low to 5 to a high of 25.

Leisure satisfaction. Leisure satisfaction was measured using the psychological subscale of the Leisure Satisfaction Scale (LSS) (Beard & Ragheb, 1980). The LSS is a 51-item questionnaire which covers various aspects of leisure satisfaction. The psychological subscale contains 13 items and indicates the extent to which respondents report receiving psychological benefits such as a sense of freedom, enjoyment, involvement, and intellectual challenge from their leisure activities. Subjects responded to each item on a 5-point scale ranging from is almost never true to is almost always true. Scores were obtained by summing the item responses resulting in a score from 13 through 65.

Hardiness. The third generation Hardiness Test was used to measure the degree to which the individual has a hardy personality. The hardy personality as conceptualized by Kobasa, Maddi, and Puccetti (1982) is defined as possessing feelings of control, commitment, and challenge. The test uses 50 items which are responded to on a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from not at all true to completely true. The test must be

scored by the Hardiness Institute and yields a total hardiness score which ranges from 0 to 100.

Coping strategies. The use of coping strategies was assessed using an instrument developed by Billings and Moos (1981). This instrument is designed to determine ways respondents cope with a given specific conflict or problem by listing 19 coping methods which the respondent may endorse. In this study, subjects were asked to indicate methods they used to manage "a typical problem you face because of being married, being a parent, and having a career, all at the same time." For scoring, the items are grouped into three method of coping categories: active-cognitive, active-behavioral, and avoidance. Active-cognitive coping includes attempts to manage one's appraisal of the stressfulness of the event, such as "tried to see the positive side of the situation" and "drew on my past experience in similar situations". Active-behavioral coping refers to overt behavioral attempts to deal directly with the problem and its effects, such as "tried to find out more about the situation" and "took some positive action". Avoidance coping refers to attempts to avoid actively confronting the problem (e.g., "prepared for the worst" and "kept my feelings to myself") or to indirectly

reduce emotional tension by such behaviors as eating or smoking more (Billings & Moos, 1981). The score for each coping measure was the percentage of items answered yes. For example, if the individual responded yes to five of the six avoidance coping strategies, the score for avoidance coping would be .83.

Social support. Perceived social support was measured by two scales developed by Procidano and Heller (1983). Perceived social support refers to the impact social networks have on the individual and can be defined as the extent to which an individual believes that his or her needs for support, information, and feedback are fulfilled (Procidano & Heller, 1983). Perceived social support from friends was measured by the first scale (PSS-Fr), and perceived social support from family was measured by the second (PSS-Fa). Each 20-item scale consisted of declarative statements to which the individual answered yes, no, or don't know. For each item, the response indicative of perceived social support was scored at +1, with total scores ranging from 0 to 20.

Data Collection

Each individual agreeing to participate in the study was sent a packet including a letter which

provided a brief description of the purpose of the study and instructions for participating in the study, the questionnaires, and a pre-addressed envelope for returning the questionnaires. Subjects' names were not placed on the questionnaire to ensure confidentiality. If the packet was not returned within two weeks, a follow-up letter was sent to the individual, reminding the participant to return the questionnaire.

Results

Question One

The first question was how can multiple role persons be described in terms of stress, satisfaction, hardiness, typical coping strategies, and levels of social support. Means and standard deviations were computed for these variables and are presented in Table 1. Multiple role participants reported a mean score of 64.2 on the stress questionnaire, which had a possible range of 48 through 240. This is below the adult norm of 86 (SD=25) reported by Lefebvre and Sandford (1985). The participants reported a mean general life satisfaction level of 11.7 on a possible scale of 2.1 through 14.7. This is similar to adult norm of 11.77 reported by Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976). On hardiness, they scored an average of 76.2 on a scale of

0 through 100 and a mean percentile rank of 63rd, based on the test's norms. The participants' mean ratings of the levels of social support they receive from their friends and from family, reported on scales of 0 through 20, were 12.0 and 16.1, respectively. The measure of typical coping strategies yielded three separate, independent scores; active-cognitive coping, active-behavioral coping, and avoidance coping. The participants reported using the highest percentage of active-cognitive strategies (.83), followed by active-behavioral (.62) and avoidance strategies (.33).

Insert Table 1 about here

Question Two

Whether multiple role men and women differed on the variables of interest was addressed in the second research question. Two-tailed t tests were used to test for significant gender differences on each variable. The means and standard deviations are presented in Table 1. Men reported significantly lower levels of stress ($t(207) = -2.40$, $p < .05$) and significantly higher levels of career satisfaction ($t(211) = 2.06$, $p < .05$) and leisure satisfaction ($t(206) = 2.28$, $p < .05$), with the other forms

of satisfaction not varying significantly by gender. Men and women also did not differ significantly on hardiness or on level of social support received from their families, but did differ significantly on level of social support received from friends ($t(211)=2.27$, $p<.05$), with women scoring higher than men. In the area of coping, women reported using a significantly higher percentage of avoidance strategies than men ($t(210)=-2.13$, $p<.05$), but did not differ significantly from men in either the percentage of active-cognitive or active-behavioral strategies reportedly used.

Question Three

Forward, stepwise multiple regression analyses were employed to answer question three of how gender, hardiness, social support, and typical coping strategies relate to the levels of career satisfaction, marital satisfaction, parental satisfaction, leisure satisfaction, and general life satisfaction in multiple role persons. One regression analysis was used each of the five types of satisfaction with each equation containing the same six predictor variables; hardiness, active-cognitive coping, active-behavioral coping, avoidance coping, social support from friends, and social support from family.

Separate analyses were used for males and females as men and women were found to differ significantly on two of the measures of satisfaction as well as on several of the predictor variables. Thus, it is likely that gender interacts with these variables. Each forward stepwise multiple regression analysis added to the regression equation the predictor variable that was most significantly related to the independent variable (with any variance shared with other predictor variables in the equation partialled out) until none of the remaining predictor variables added significantly ($p<.05$) to the regression equation. The resultant equation contained only the predictor variables that significantly entered the regression equation. It must be noted that mediating variables which correlate with a type of satisfaction might not enter the regression equation because they also correlate with one or more of the other mediating variables, thus not adding significant additional predicting power to the equation. Thus, this analysis does not yield all related variables, only the most powerful predictors. The multiple regression analyses of satisfaction variables are presented in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 about here

General life satisfaction. As can be seen by examining Table 2, general life satisfaction for men was significantly predicted by hardiness, social support from family, and low use of avoidance coping strategies, together accounting for 29% of the variance in general life satisfaction. Of particular note is that a decrease in the use of avoidance coping strategies from 100% to 0% would raise general life satisfaction by 2.00 points. For women, hardiness and social support from family were also significant predictors of general life satisfaction, as well as social support from friends, accounting for 34% of its variance. Increasing hardiness, social support from family, and social support from friends by one point each would be expected to increase general life satisfaction by .08, .15, and .07 points, respectively.

Career satisfaction. Career satisfaction for men was found to be significantly predicted by two variables, hardiness and active-cognitive coping. These variables accounted for 20% of the variance in male career satisfaction. Both variables were positively

related to career satisfaction. A one point increase in hardiness would bring an expected increase of .27 points of career satisfaction, and an increase from using no active-cognitive coping strategies to using 100% of these strategies would bring an expected increase of 6.07 points of career satisfaction. For women, career satisfaction was significantly predicted by hardiness and social support from friends, together accounting for 11% of the variance in career satisfaction. Both hardiness and social support from friends were positive indicators, with a one point increase in hardiness and social support from friends expected to increase career satisfaction by .15 and .27 points, respectively.

Marital satisfaction. For men, marital satisfaction was significantly predicted by social support from the family and low usage of avoidance coping strategies, such that a one point increase in social support from family would bring an expected increase of .96 points of marital satisfaction, and an increase in the use of avoidance coping strategies from none to 100% would decrease marital satisfaction by 10.19 points. Only social support from family significantly predicted marital satisfaction in women. However, this variable alone accounted for 22% of the

variance in marital satisfaction. Being a positive predictor, each increase one point of social support from family would be expected to increase marital satisfaction by .88 points.

Parental satisfaction. Parental satisfaction for men was significantly predicted by three variables: hardiness, social support from family, and use of active-behavioral coping. Together these variables accounted for 35% of the variance in parental satisfaction, and all three were positive indicators. For women, social support from family and social support from friends were the two significant predictors of parental satisfaction, accounting for 12% of its variance. Both were positive predictors, with social support from family having a larger impact on parental satisfaction than social support from friends, .17 and .10 points of parental satisfaction for every point of social support from family and friends, respectively.

Leisure satisfaction. Leisure satisfaction was significantly predicted by hardiness and active-behavioral coping strategies for men, as indicated by the regression analysis summarized in Table 2. Together these variables accounted for 23% of the variance in leisure satisfaction for men. Among women, leisure

satisfaction was significantly predicted by three variables, hardiness, social support from family, and social support from friends, together accounting for 20% of the variance in level of satisfaction.

Question Four

How gender, hardiness, social support, and typical coping strategies relate to the level of stress in multiple role persons was addressed in research question four. This question was answered using two (one for males, one for females) forward, stepwise multiple regression analyses with stress, a continuous variable, the dependent variable and hardiness, coping strategies, and social support the predictor variables for each equation. The data were analyzed separately by gender because men and women were found to differ significantly on stress and several of the predictor variables. The stepwise regression model includes only those variables that significantly ($p<.05$) entered the equation.

Insert Table 3 about here

The regression analysis equations for stress in multiple role men and women are located in Table 3. For men, the multiple regression analysis indicated that two

variables, hardiness and avoidance coping, were significant predictors of stress, accounting for 25% of its variance. Hardiness was negatively related to stress, such that for every increase of one point of hardiness there would be a .56 point decrease in stress. Avoidance coping was positively related to stress. Men who used 100% of the avoidance coping strategies would be expected to score 13.45 points higher in stress than men who reported using none of these strategies.

Likewise for the women, the same two variables, hardiness and avoidance coping strategies, were found to be significant predictors of stress. However, these variables accounted for only 11% of the variance in the stress level of the women. Hardiness was negatively related to stress, with a predicted decrease of .30 points of stress for every point of hardiness. Avoidance coping strategies were positively related to stress, with women who used 100% of these strategies predicted to score 13.08 points higher on stress than women who did not use any avoidance coping strategies.

Discussion

This study investigated role and life satisfaction and stress in men and women involved in multiple life roles and explored the mediating effects of coping

strategies, hardiness, social support, and gender on these levels of stress and satisfaction. The multiple role persons in this study can be described as healthy, with low levels of stress, moderate hardiness, moderate to high levels of social support, and predominant use of effective (active-cognitive) coping strategies. They may also be described as mostly satisfied with their lives and their roles. These findings are generally consistent with previous empirical studies on multiple role persons, and lend to support to theorists such as Sieber (1974) who have proposed that being involved in multiple roles provides increased opportunity for satisfaction.

Several gender differences were found in this study. Multiple role men were found to experience less stress, to have higher career and leisure satisfaction, to perceive less social support from their friends, and to use fewer avoidant coping strategies when compared to multiple role women. Thus, the men tended to be healthier, experiencing less stress, and to be more satisfied in their non-family roles than women. Clearly the men in this study receive more distinct positive outcomes from a multiple role lifestyle than do the women. These results suggest that previous studies

which merged male and female data may have misrepresented the impact of multiple roles for both men and women.

Another focus of this study was on the role of mediating variables in the outcomes associated with a multiple role lifestyle. As proposed, the mediating variables of social support, hardiness, and use of coping strategies were related to at least one type of satisfaction for men and women, and all forms of satisfaction were predicted by some combination of the mediating variables. With the exception of life satisfaction, the mediators were more powerful predictors of satisfaction for the men than for women.

Men's life and role satisfaction was generally predicted by a combination of hardiness and coping strategies. Interestingly, women's marital and parental satisfaction was predicted exclusively by social support, while hardiness joined social support in predicting life, career, and leisure satisfaction of women.

Hardiness was a particularly important mediator for the satisfaction of both men and women, being included in seven of the 10 regression equations. While social support, both from family and friends, was important to

the satisfaction level experienced by women, social support was not as important to male satisfaction levels. Coping strategies was a more powerful predictor of satisfaction in men than in women. One form of coping was included in each of the equations for men, whereas coping did not enter into any of the equations for women.

These mediating variables have not been considered in previous satisfaction studies so the results of this study are unique. The results provide evidence that mediators which have been typically thought of in terms of reducing stress also play a role in increasing role and life satisfaction. The personality trait of hardiness, previously linked to stress resistance (Kobasa, 1979), is clearly related to satisfaction in both men and women. Of particular interest is the finding that social support is related to role and life satisfaction in women whereas type of coping strategy predicts levels of satisfaction in men. These gender differences are important for future research and should be considered in planning counseling interventions with multiple role individuals and couples.

A relationship between the mediating variables of hardiness, social support, coping strategies, and stress

in multiple role persons was also found. Low levels of hardiness and use of avoidance coping strategies were significant predictors of stress for both men and women. Contrary to previous research, none of the other variables were significantly correlated with stress. Hardiness was found to be a negative predictor of stress, which supports the research on men done by Kobasa and her colleagues (e.g., Kobasa, 1979) and provides initial evidence for the role of hardiness in women's stress. Use of avoidance coping strategies was found to increase stress, whereas the use of the other two forms of coping were not related to stress. This finding is consistent with previous findings by Billings and Moos (1981). Social support from neither friends nor family were related to stress. This finding is not consistent with the substantial literature that shows that social support has a positive effect on physical and psychological health (Bruhn & Philips, 1984). It is consistent with one study using a sample of 157 lawyers (Kobasa, 1982) in which the author reported that social support was not related to strain as measured by a checklist of 16 symptoms of illness.

Caution must be used in interpreting descriptive studies, including this one, because of the limitations

of the sample and the instruments. Although this study used random selection of participants and had a high return rate of completed questionnaires for those who agreed to participate in the study (91% of men and 87% of women), not all potential participants responded to the initial request, and some who responded declined to participate. Thus, a sampling bias due to self selection may be present. While all participants held the three multiple roles of career, parent, and spouse, it is not known how much actual role involvement (i.e. time and commitment) each individual had in each role. Furthermore, this study used participants who held positions at a large university. While these results may generalize to multiple role academics, it is not known if persons in different careers would be similar. Finally, self-report questionnaires are inherently limited by the ability and desire of the participants to answer them truthfully and accurately.

This study has implications for future research, for the use of a theoretical model of stress in research, and for counseling multiple role persons. The results indicate gender differences in the multiple role lifestyle and use of mediating variables. These differences need further study and future studies of

career, work, or lifestyle need to include gender as a variable. Of particular interest are the findings that mediating variables such as hardiness, social support, coping, and gender, which have typically been studied in terms of their abilities to moderate stress, also work to increase role and life satisfaction in multiple role persons. Further research is needed to help clarify these relationships. Experimental studies that systematically vary these mediating variables to determine their impact on stress and satisfaction are needed. Furthermore, other contributing variables, such as measures of role strain, need to be identified and researched. Finally, this study was limited to academic multiple role persons. Further investigations need to be done with multiple role persons in other careers.

This study provides support for the interactional model of stress proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). Variables proposed by the model as affecting cognitive appraisal of demands such as hardiness, coping strategies and social support were shown to be related to the levels of stress and/or satisfaction experienced by multiple role persons. Thus, this model was useful as a framework for this study and such a model should be used in future research on multiple role persons instead

of the previously employed more limited stimulus-based and response-based models of stress.

This study also has implications for counseling multiple role persons. Although the participants reported low levels of stress and moderately high satisfaction, suggesting they may not feel a need for counseling, 17% of the men and 18% of the women indicated that one of the coping strategies they used was to talk to a professional. Thus, professionals need to be aware of ways to help individuals involved in multiple roles. This study provides evidence that hardiness, social support, and coping strategies all are related to the levels of stress and/or satisfaction these people experience. All three of these are characteristics or skills that the individual can change. Professionals need to develop strategies to assist multiple role persons to make these changes (e.g., to develop more sense of control to increase hardiness).

In summary, role and life stress and satisfaction in men and women with multiple roles were examined in this study. Using an interactional model of stress as a framework, the mediating effects of hardiness, social support, coping strategies, and gender on role and life

satisfaction and stress were explored. Participants reported relatively low levels of stress and moderately high levels of all forms of satisfaction with men reporting significantly lower levels of stress and higher levels of career satisfaction and leisure satisfaction than women. Women indicated significantly higher levels of perceived social support from their friends and used a higher percentage of avoidance coping strategies than men. Various forms of life and role satisfactions could be significantly predicted by the variables of hardiness, social support, and coping strategies, although the predictors were different for males and females suggesting gender is also an important variable. Stress was significantly related to low hardiness and avoidance coping strategies for both sexes. Research is now needed to clearly establish a causal relationship between mediating variables and stress and satisfaction, to explore other variables such as role strain, and to replicate these results with multiple role persons in a variety of careers.

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Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Stress, Satisfaction Variables, and Mediating Variables by Gender

Variable	All		Men		Women		t
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Stress	64.2	12.0	62.1	12.1	66.1	11.5	-2.40*
Satisfaction							
Life	11.7	1.9	11.8	2.0	11.6	1.9	.66
Career	35.3	5.9	36.2	5.7	34.5	6.0	2.06*
Marital	40.7	8.3	40.9	8.7	40.5	7.9	.40
Parental	20.2	2.9	19.9	2.9	20.4	2.8	-1.20
Leisure	49.2	8.3	50.6	8.3	48.0	7.9	2.28*
Hardiness	76.2	7.9	76.4	8.4	76.0	7.5	.35
Social Support							
Friends	12.0	5.1	11.2	4.8	12.8	5.3	-2.27*
Family	16.1	4.3	15.9	4.3	16.4	4.2	-0.78
Coping							
Active-cog.	.83	.17	.83	.18	.83	.16	-0.08
Active-beh.	.62	.18	.62	.18	.61	.18	.14
Avoidance	.33	.20	.30	.20	.36	.20	-2.13*

*$p < .05$

Table 2

Stepwise Regression Analyses of the Relationship between Satisfaction Variables and Mediating Variables by Gender

Gender	Parameter	Estimate	SE	F	p
		Life satisfaction			
Men	$F(3,98)=13.56$, $p<.0001$ $r^2=.29$				
	Intercept	4.94			
	Hardiness	0.08	0.02	11.41	.001
	Social support-family	0.10	0.04	5.97	.02
	Avoidance coping	-2.00	0.89	5.05	.03
Women	$F(3,107)=18.43$, $p<.0001$ $r^2=.34$				
	Intercept	2.24			
	Social support-family	0.15	0.04	18.28	.0001
	Hardiness	0.08	0.02	14.83	.0002
	Social support-friends	0.07	0.03	6.60	.01
		Career satisfaction			
Men	$F(2,99)=12.51$, $p<.0001$ $r^2=.20$				
	Intercept	10.61			
	Hardiness	0.27	0.06	18.91	.0001
	Active-cognitive coping	6.07	2.95	4.24	.04
Women	$F(2,110)=6.76$, $p<.002$ $r^2=.11$				
	Intercept	19.56			
	Social support-friends	0.27	0.11	6.59	.01
	Hardiness	0.15	0.08	4.07	.05

(Table continues)

Gender	Parameter	Estimate	SE	F	p
	Marital satisfaction				
Men	$F(2,99)=23.06$, $p<.0001$ $r^2=.32$				
	Intercept	28.70			
	Social support-family	0.96	0.17	32.03	.0001
	Avoidance coping	-10.19	3.64	7.82	.0062
Women	$F(1,109)=30.88$, $p<.0001$ $r^2=.22$				
	Intercept	26.08			
	Social support-family	0.88	0.16	30.88	.0001
	Parental satisfaction				
Men	$F(3,98)=17.23$, $p<.0001$ $r^2=.35$				
	Intercept	7.81			
	Social support-family	0.28	0.06	23.86	.0001
	Active-behavioral coping	3.78	1.28	8.69	.004
	Hardiness	0.07	0.03	5.22	.02
Women	$F(2,108)=7.29$, $p<.001$ $r^2=.12$				
	Intercept	16.30			
	Social support-family	0.17	0.06	7.86	.006
	Social support-friends	0.10	0.05	4.38	.04

(Table continues)

Gender	Parameter	Estimate	SE	F	p
		Leisure satisfaction			
Men	$F(2,99)=14.44$, $p<.0001$ $r^2=.23$				
	Intercept	11.72			
	Hardiness	0.41	0.90	20.45	.0001
	Active-behavioral coping	12.43	4.10	9.19	.003
Women	$F(3,107)=9.05$, $p<.0001$ $r^2=.20$				
	Intercept	21.99			
	Social support-friends	0.42	0.13	9.87	.002
	Social support-family	0.38	0.17	5.27	.02
	Hardiness	0.19	0.09	4.03	.04

Table 3

Stepwise Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Stress and Mediating Variables for Men and Women

Gender	Parameter	Estimate	SE	F	p
Men	$F(2,99)=16.45$, $p<.0001$ $r^2=.25$				
	Intercept	100.63			
	Hardiness	-0.56	0.13	17.65	.0001
	Avoidance coping	13.45	5.53	5.92	.02
Women	$F(2,108)=7.00$, $p<.001$ $r^2=.11$				
	Intercept	84.34			
	Avoidance coping	13.08	5.42	5.82	.02
	Hardiness	-0.30	0.15	4.29	.04